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Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
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PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AND THE PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

Written statement submitted by Caucasians United for Reparations and Emancipation, a non-governmental organization on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[9 June 1999]

Legacy of the African Slave Trade:

Statement by Silis Muhammad on behalf of African Americans

1. The lingering effects of plantation slavery have left me and my people in a state of genocide. Genocide is to a group as homicide is to an individual. Rent from our land, our roots, sold and forced into slavery: we have been recognized as slaves, Niggers, Negroes, Coloureds, Black Americans and today we are the so-called African Americans. We are more than 40 million, and yet we are a people dead. We have been dead, as slaves, for 400 years. Is not our struggle for human dignity equally as important as that of groups at war for their human life? Ours is a war of the mind. The United Nations will send troops to protect physical life. Is not our war as great? Is not the mind as precious as the body? To be alive, with the knowledge that I am, as a man, dead, is worse than physical death. Death of the physical body sets you free. Death of the human spirit is a living hell.

2. Beginning with slavery and to this date, we are a revolving nation, within the nation of America. We are absent our foundation - our human rights: culture, religion and mother's tongue. We have lost our original identity. While we are a people, and not a minority, we are treated as a minority by the United States Government. Therefore, we bring our case to the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities.

3. The Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which flows from the Universal Declaration of Human rights, addresses the question of identity. Concomitantly, the Universal Declaration envisages, to quote Professor Eide, "the establishment of a common framework of protected human rights for everyone, everywhere".

4. The United States knew, upon the adoption of the Universal Declaration on 10 December 1948, that African Americans did not have their original mother's tongue, their inherent religion or their ancestral culture - their human identity. America did not have us in mind at the time of signing that document; or if had the intention to persuade the United Nations that it did. To the extent that the United Nations left us out of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Government of the United States has designed a falsehood which has hampered the United Nations and its Member States. We have been left out of the declaration on the rights of minorities also, because of this falsehood.

5. To be left out of both the declaration on the rights of minorities and the Universal Declaration is to not have recognition of our human life, politically. We have no identity because we were intentionally deprived of education in our mother's tongue, thus we do not have our own culture. Absent our culture, we exist in a state of civil death.

6. We are concerned about our right to education in our mother's tongue as we know that it would guarantee us an identity. We appreciate the declaration on the rights of minorities in its focus on education, but we conclude that even if the United States wanted to, it could not restore us to our family

roots and our mother's tongue. It cannot trace our lineage except to the continent of Africa, where there exist over 1,200 families of languages. Therefore, we must be allowed to choose the mother's tongue or tongues that we, as a people, wish to speak. We feel we must have the protection of a United Nations forum as we engage in this stage of the mental war for our identity, lest we be targeted and considered subversive by the United States Government.

7. Our identity as a people, in possession of our human rights, can never be achieved if left entirely to the will of the United States. Why? America's refusal to ratify the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity in 1968, some 20 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration, makes it blatantly clear, again, that it did not have in mind human rights for everyone, everywhere.

8. The failure of the United States to ratify that particular convention reveals the intent of the United States Government at the moment and time of its act. Its thinking is consistent with its thinking in 1948. Either it did not have us in mind, or it seeks specifically to block the pathway to our human rights - our identity. While holding us in this ever-revolving state, the United States holds itself as being in full compliance with the spirit of United Nations - protected human rights for everyone, everywhere, and causes us to remain trapped within the Anglo-American culture, regenerating her religion and tongue, in reality, her identity.

9. Thus, the United States has committed fraud against the United Nations, genocide against us, and we linger in a state of civil death, as our identity has not been preserved. We conclude that since its inception, a consistent violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been perpetrated by the United States.

10. We recommend the establishment of a United Nations forum, with expert guidance, for African Americans in the United States, at United Nations Headquarters. We believe that the United Nations has a moral obligation to persuade the United States to financially provide for the forum inasmuch as the fraudulent acts of the United States Government have hampered the United Nations in fulfilling its obligation to protect human rights for everyone, everywhere. Surely there ought to be grave concern that more than 40 million people have been left out and do not have their protected human rights. If the United States Government refuses to financially support a forum, we would gratefully accept the sponsorship of the United Nations or any sympathetic Government.

11. We want a forum for the purpose of restoring our human rights - which only we can reclaim or choose: our legal, political being and status as a people. Within a forum, we will (i) promote respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights amongst ourselves, which will ultimately include the Diaspora; (ii) rebuild a kind of council or governing body amongst ourselves, absent the social engineering of the United States Government; (iii) openly discuss within this council the devolution, of pertinent parts of the Constitution of the United States, which defines us as three fifths of a

human being; (iv) make choices on the mother's tongue or tongues that we, as a people, wish to speak; and (v) discuss reclamation, restoration, repatriation, reparations and migration of some of us to a friendly nation.

12. This package will be presented to the United States. The venture commenced, intelligence can be gained for the Sub-Commission that might usefully address the continuing legal, political and economic legacies of the slave trade as experienced by the victims. We want these discussions to benefit race relations in the society of the United States. The establishment of a forum for the reasons stated would also eliminate the burden of slavery for America's future generations.

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